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Photo by Todd Berenger

Mi 'slab' es su 'slab'

A crew from Concrete Structures Inc. of Arizona poured concrete slabs on Monday in Village II of the new privatized housing. Village II, has 51 units, 38 three-bedroom homes and 13 four-bedroom homes. More than 3,570 cubic yards of concrete is being poured for this village. Each slab takes about two hours to place and five hours to finish. They are expecting to start framing the homes on Feb. 9.

Kirtland AFB major laid to rest

Maj. Steven Plumhoff, 33, of Neshanic Station, N.J., and assigned to the 58th Special Operations Wing was laid to rest Jan. 21 in Arlington National Cemetery with the four military members killed with him.

The five veterans of the war on terror—four from the Air Force and one from the Army—were aboard an MH-53M Pave Low helicopter when it crashed in Afghanistan Nov. 23 while supporting Operation Mountain Resolve, part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Those laid to rest with Major Plumhoff are:

★ Army Sgt. Major Phillip R. Albert, 41, Terryville, Conn. He was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y.

★ Master Sgt. William J. Kerwood, 37, Houston, Mo.;

★ Tech. Sgt. Howard A. Walters, 33, Port Huron, Mich.; and

★ Staff Sgt. Thomas A. Walkup Jr., 25, Millville, N.J.

All three Airmen were assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

New civilian system offers speed, flexibility

The National Security Personnel System, called the most dramatic civilian personnel system transformation in the last 50 years, is expected to provide flexibility and speed in placing DOD civilian employees where they are most needed.

The new system, being implemented by a recently appointed Air Force team, reduces the time needed to hire new people, streamlines the promotion process and offers performance bonuses.

"The new NSPS will greatly improve our ability to hire and retain the best candidates from the private sector," said Steve Parker, Kirtland AFB

Civilian Personnel Flight chief.

"In addition, our current workforce should look forward to the new pay for performance system which will pave a clear path for improving productivity and ensuring those who contribute positively to mission accomplishment will reap the rewards."

Sarah Bonilla, team chief, has said the new system has "radical changes to civilian personnel administration," offering more flexibility and rewards.

Classification and performance management are the greatest changes in the system. Pay banding replaces the gen-

eral and wage schedule grades, which is expected to simplify the classification of positions with less need to identify specific differences in duties. This change offers new streamlined position descriptions.

Ms. Bonilla also noted the new system allows more competitive hiring and more options for current employees in the form of ability to give an employee a small pay increase when reassigned to tougher or bigger jobs.

Important safeguards and rights currently in place for civilian employees remain protected. Employees retain merit system principles, rules against prohibited personnel

practices, anti-discrimination laws, the ability to join unions, appeal rights, leave and attendance, retirement, benefits, safety and drug abuse programs.

DOD plans to implement the new personnel system for as many as 300,000 employees during fiscal year 2004, Mr. Parker said, with the remaining people being converted in the future.

Mr. Parker added that decisions have not been made regarding specific installations and defense agencies to be brought on-line this year.

Information about the NSPS at the DOD level is at www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps.

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